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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/739,373	12/19/2000	Yuichi Hosoda	35.C14994	3298

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FITZPATRICK CELLA HARPER & SCINTO
30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA
NEW YORK, NY 10112

EXAMINER

PHAM, THIERRY L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2624

DATE MAILED: 02/09/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/739,373

Applicant(s)

HOSODA, YUICHI

Examiner

Thierry L. Pham

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 December 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-11,20,21,23,24,30-33,35 and 36 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 12-19,22,25-29,33 and 34 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

- This action is responsive to the following communication: Response to Election/Restriction requirement filed on 12/7/05.
- Claims 1-36 are pending, wherein claims 1-11, 20-21, 23-24, 30-33, and 35-36 are withdrawn from consideration.
- Preliminary amendment filed on 12/7/05 in which claim 12 has been amended to depend from claim 26; claim 22 has been amended to depend from claim 33; and claim 25 has been amended to depend from claim 34 has been received and entered by the examiner.

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election without traverse of Group III in the reply filed on 12/7/05 is acknowledged. Claims 1-11, 20-21, 23-24, 30-33, and 35-36 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected inventions, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on 12/7/05.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 12-19, 22, 25-29, 33-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tomory (U.S. 5815764).

Regarding claim 26, Tomory further discloses an image recording apparatus (printer, fig. 1) which can connect with a sheet processing apparatus having plural storage units (plurality of bins, fig. 1) capable of storing sheets, comprising:

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- reception means (network, fig. 2) for receiving data including image data from a remote data processing apparatus (i.e. workstation, fig. 2);
- image recording means (i.e. printer, fig. 1) for recording an image based on the received image data, on a sheet; and
- control means (controller 100, fig. 1) for performing control, according as first data instructing to distribute the sheets to the storage unit belonging to which of plural groups (plurality of assigned bins for individual and group, fig. 5) of the grouped storage units is included in the data received from said remote data processing apparatus, to distribute the sheets (i.e. bins, fig. 1 and 5) on which the image data from said remote data processing apparatus has been recorded to the storage unit belonging to the group according to the first data,
- wherein said control means (controller 100, fig. 1) enables said image recording apparatus to accept the printing job in which the first data is selectively set with respect to each job (print job with assigned bins, col. 15, lines 25-50), and
- in case where, from a first-type print job that the first data is not set and a second-type print job that the first data is set, said second-type print job is accepted (interrupt to have second print job request printed, col. 16, lines 1-60, in other words, first print job request is interrupted to have second print job with higher priority to be printed and/or to overwrite the first print job) by said image recording apparatus, it enables said image recording apparatus to execute the print process of the same page in said second-type print job plural times (multiple copies, col. 15, lines 40-50).

Regarding claim 27, Tomory further discloses an apparatus according to claim 26, wherein, when second data discriminatingly instructing for each storage unit to distribute the sheets to which of the plural storage units is included in the data received (col. 15, lines 25-50) from said remote data processing apparatus together with the first data, said control means performs control to distribute the sheets on which the image data from said remote data processing apparatus has been recorded to the storage units belonging to the group (distributed printed with according to assigned bins, fig. 5) according to the first data and the storage unit according to the second data.

Regarding claim 28, Tomory further discloses an apparatus according to claim 26, wherein, according as the first data is included in the data received from said remote data processing apparatus, the image recording of the image data of a same page is performed plural times without receiving the image data of the same page from said remote data processing apparatus plural times (inherently, all print job includes quantity to be printed).

Regarding claim 29, Tomory further discloses an apparatus according to claim 27, further comprising notification means (job notification, col. 12, lines 1-10) for notifying each user belonging to the group according to the first data and a user according to the second data that the sheets were distributed.

Regarding claim 12, Tomory further discloses an image recording apparatus according to claim 26, said image recording apparatus further comprising:

- registration means (plurality of registered users name for plurality of holding bins, figs. 3-9, col. 11, lines 30-55 and col. 12, lines 25-60) for registering in a memory plural discrimination names to each of the holding units, the plural discrimination names including a user name and names of plural groups (discharging printed sheets to assigned users/groups, fig. 5, cols. 11-12) to which a user corresponding to the user name belongs and being transmitted from each of said superior apparatuses or directly designated from an operation unit;
- discrimination name notification means (notification, fig. 11) for notifying said superior apparatus of the plural discrimination names registered by said registration means, in accordance with a request from said superior apparatus; and
- sheet discharge control means (discharging printed sheets to assigned users/groups, fig. 5, cols. 11-12) for discharging the printing job to which the discrimination name has been designated to the holding unit to which the discrimination name same as the discrimination name designated as a sheet discharge address to the printing job has been designated,
- wherein said image recording apparatus enables (printer for accepting the designated bins with respect to each job which assigned by users, figs. 3-11) to accept a printing job in which the designation of the sheet discharge address based on the user name (i.e. "Paul" is assigned to bin 1, fig. 5, col. 13, lines 60 to col. 14, lines 2 and col. 15, lines 24-50) and the designation of the

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sheet discharge based on the group name (i.e., bin 3 is assigned for workgroup, fig. 5, col. 15, lines 24-50) are selectively set with respect to each job; and

- wherein said controller means is further adapted to cause said image recording apparatus to execute, in a case where, from a third-type print job that the designation of the sheet discharge address based on the group name is not set and a fourth-type print job that the designation of the sheet discharge address based on the group name is at least set (interrupt to have fourth print job request printed, col. 16, lines 1-60, in other words, third print job request is interrupted to have fourth print job with higher priority to be printed and/or to overwrite the third print job), said fourth-type print job is accepted by said image recording apparatus, the print process of the same page in said fourth-type print job plural times.

Regarding claim 13, Tomory further discloses an apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising sheet discharge end notification means (completion notification, col. 12, lines 1-10) for notifying said superior apparatus of the end of an image recording process of the printing job, after the image recording process of the printing job was ended by said sheet discharge control means; and holding unit monitoring means for always monitoring a state of each of the holding units (updating the status of each bin, col. 12, lines 1-10), updating the state, and if necessary notifying said superior apparatus of a change of the holding unit state.

Regarding claim 14, Tomory further discloses an apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said registration means stores a discrimination name registration content including an E-mail address notified from said superior apparatus in the memory, and E-mail transmission means is provided to transmit an E-mail notifying (e-mail notification via using Microsoft Mail, col. 12, lines 1-10 and col. 12, lines 20-40) the sheet discharge end in accordance with E-mail addresses registered to the respective holding units to which the printing job was discharged, after an image recording process of the printing job was ended by said sheet discharge control means.

Regarding claim 15, Tomory further discloses an apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said E-mail transmission means controls whether or not an E-mail notification should be

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performed, on the basis of an instruction whether or not the E-mail notification (e-mail notification via using Microsoft Mail, col. 12, lines 1-10 and col. 13, lines 20-40) designated to the printing job should be performed.

Regarding claim 16, Tomory further discloses an apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said registration means stores a discrimination name registration content including an E-mail address (email address, col. 13, lines 20-40) in the memory, and said sheet discharge end notification means notifies said superior apparatus of the E-mail addresses registered to all the holding units to which the printing job was discharged, after the image recording process of the printing job was ended by said sheet discharge control means.

Regarding claim 17, Tomory further discloses an apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the E-mail includes information such as a name of the user designating the printing job, a content of the printing job, the number of printing in the printing job, the number of output copies in the printing job, a date when the printing job was output, and information concerning the image recording apparatus from which the printing job was output (printing status, col. 12, lines 1-10), and said E-mail transmission means transmits the E-mail to the E-mail address (email address, col. 13, lines 20-40) of the user corresponding to the user name registered to the holding unit to which the printing job was discharged or the E-mail address of the user who belongs to the group corresponding to the group name registered to the holding unit to which the printing job was discharged.

Regarding claim 18, Tomory further discloses an apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the discrimination name is information representing an owner (i.e. "Paul", col. 13, lines 20-40) who exclusively uses the holding unit, and is obtained by directly inputting or selecting a name according to a user's usage by the user on said superior apparatus or said operation unit.

Regarding claim 19, Tomory further discloses an apparatus according to claim 12, wherein plural holding units are provided on the body of said image recording apparatus (printer with plurality of bins, fig. 1) or an option apparatus having plural holding units is connectable.

Regarding claim 33, Tomory discloses a control method for an image recording apparatus (printer, fig. 1) which can connect with a sheet processing apparatus having plural storage units (plurality of bins, fig. 1) capable of storing sheets, comprising:

- a reception step of (network, fig. 2) receiving data including image data from a remote data processing apparatus (i.e. workstation, fig. 2);
- an image recording step of (i.e. printer, fig. 1) recording an image based on the received image data, on a sheet; and
- a control step (controller 100, fig. 1) of performing control, according as first data instructing to distribute the sheets to the storage unit belonging to which of plural groups (plurality of assigned bins for individual and group, fig. 5) of the grouped storage units is included in the data received from said remote data processing apparatus, to distribute the sheets (i.e. bins, fig. 1 and 5) on which the image data from said remote data processing apparatus has been recorded to the storage unit belonging to the group according to the first data,
- a step of enabling (controller 100, fig. 1) the image recording apparatus to accept the printing job in which the first data is selectively set with respect to each job (print job with assigned bins, col. 15, lines 25-50), and
- a step of, in case where, from a first-type print job that the first data is not set and a second-type print job that the first data is set, said second-type print job is (interrupt to have second print job request printed, col. 16, lines 1-60, in other words, first print job request is interrupted to have second print job with higher priority to be printed and/or to overwrite the first print job) accepted by said image recording apparatus, it enables said image recording apparatus to execute the print process of the same page in said second-type print job plural times.

Regarding claim 22, Tomory further discloses an image recording apparatus according to claim 33, said method further comprising:

- a registration step of (plurality of registered users name for plurality of holding bins, figs. 3-9, col. 11, lines 30-55 and col. 12, lines 25-60) registering in a memory plural discrimination names

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to each of a plurality of holding units, the plural discrimination names including a user name and names of plural groups (discharging printed sheets to assigned users/groups, fig. 5, cols. 11-12) to which a user corresponding to the user name belongs and being transmitted from each of said superior apparatuses or directly designated from an operation unit;

- a discrimination name notification step (notification, fig. 11) of notifying a superior apparatus of the plural discrimination names registered by said registration means, in accordance with a request from said superior apparatus; and
- a sheet discharge control step (discharging printed sheets to assigned users/groups, fig. 5, cols. 11-12) of discharging the printing job to which the discrimination name has been designated to the holding unit to which the discrimination name same as the discrimination name designated as a sheet discharge address to the printing job has been designated,
- a step of enabling (printer for accepting the designated bins with respect to each job which assigned by users, figs. 3-11) to accept the printing job in which the designation of the sheet discharge address based on the user name (i.e. "Paul" is assigned to bin 1, fig. 5, col. 13, lines 60 to col. 14, lines 2 and col. 15, lines 24-50) and the designation of the sheet discharge based on the group name (i.e., bin 3 is assigned for workgroup, fig. 5, col. 15, lines 24-50) are selectively set with respect to each job; and
- an additional control step of causing the image recording apparatus to execute, in a case where, from a third-type print job that the designation of the sheet discharge based on the group name is not set and a fourth-type print job that the designation of the sheet discharge address based on the group name is at least set, said fourth-type print job is accepted (interrupt to have fourth print job request printed, col. 16, lines 1-60, in other words, third print job request is interrupted to have fourth print job with higher priority to be printed and/or to overwrite the third print job) by the image recording apparatus, the print process of the same page in the fourth-type print job plural times.

Regarding claims 25, and 34: Claims 25, and 34 recite limitations that are similar and in the same scope of invention as to those in claims 22 & 33 except computer readable memory for storing computer programs. All computers/printers have some type of computer readable

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medium (i.e. print server, fig. 1) for storing computer programs, hence claims 25 & 34 would be rejected using the same rationale as in claims 22 & 33.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 8/19/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

- Regarding claim 26, the applicants argued the cited prior art of record fails to teach and/or suggest the newly added features/limitations “in case where, from a first-type print job that the first data is not set and a second-type print job that the first data is set, said second-type print job is accepted by said image recording apparatus, it enables said image recording apparatus to execute the print process of the same page in said second-type print job plural times”.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (above) are not recited in the previous rejected claim(s). However, Tomory explicitly teaches said controller means is further adapted to cause said image recording apparatus to execute, in a case where, from a third-type print job that the designation of the sheet discharge address based on the group name is not set and a fourth-type print job that the designation of the sheet discharge address based on the group name is at least set (interrupt to have fourth print job request printed, col. 16, lines 1-60, in other words, third print job request is interrupted to have fourth print job with higher priority to be printed and/or to overwrite the third print job), said fourth-type print job is accepted by said image recording apparatus, the print process of the same page in said fourth-type print job plural times.

Conclusion

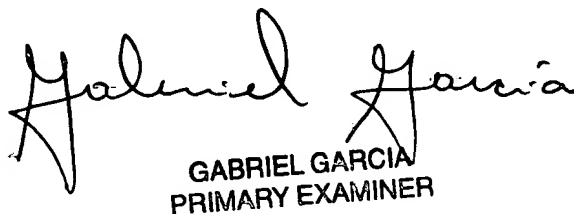
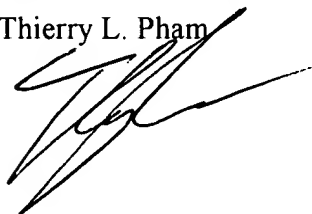
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thierry L. Pham whose telephone number is (571) 272-7439. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (9:30 AM - 6:00 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David K. Moore can be reached on (571)272-7437. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Thierry L. Pham


GABRIEL GARCIA
PRIMARY EXAMINER